



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

May 12, 2014

For More Information, Contact:

Tracy Miller

State Epidemiologist

North Dakota Department of Health

Phone: 701.328.2378

E-mail: tkmiller@nd.gov

Health Officials Provide Update on Hepatitis C Outbreak in Minot Area

Total number of cases associated with the outbreak now at 45

BISMARCK, N.D.—The North Dakota Department of Health has confirmed an additional case of hepatitis C related to the outbreak in Ward County. The case count is now at 45. “It is important to note that this case was most likely not newly infected with hepatitis C, but likely exposed earlier either in 2011 or 2012,” said Tracy Miller, State Epidemiologist for the Department of Health.

The Department of Health will be attempting to contact individuals known to share risk factors associated with being a case in the outbreak, but were not tested or declined testing when contacted initially. People need to know whether or not they are infected, so being tested is important. Details about how to get tested will be included in the letter being sent out.

The department continues to investigate the outbreak by conducting further analysis and reviewing data already collected previously during the investigation. The top priority for the department is to ensure that transmission of this infection has stopped. To achieve this, the department is conducting ongoing testing and has conducted on-site assessments of infection control practices. No newly infected cases of hepatitis C have been found in people with exposures associated with the outbreak since October 2013.

— more —

600 E. Boulevard Ave. Dept. 301, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0200
Phone: 701.328.2372 Fax: 701.328.4727 E-mail: health@nd.gov

Visit the health department home page at www.ndhealth.gov.

In December, the department announced preliminary findings including:

- All cases being current or former residents of ManorCare in Minot
- A statistical association with being infected with the outbreak strain of hepatitis C and receiving the following services at the facility:
 - Phlebotomy
 - Podiatry
 - Toenail care
- The investigation has not identified risk factors associated with other types of healthcare or other healthcare facilities.

Hepatitis C is a virus that affects the liver of infected people. People become infected when the blood of an infected individual enters the bloodstream of a person who is not infected. Most people when infected will not have any symptoms or have only mild, non-specific symptoms and can go undiagnosed for years.

In general, people who inject drugs or have received tattoos from an unregulated source should be tested for hepatitis C. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also recommends that people who were born from 1945 to 1964 (baby boomers) should be tested at least once in their lifetime for hepatitis C.

Reporters needing more information can call Tracy Miller, State Epidemiologist, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2378.

– 30 –

Please note: To access archived news releases and other information, visit the North Dakota Department of Health Press Room at www.nddohpressroom.gov.

Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ndhealth or twitter at twitter.com/nddoh.

600 E. Boulevard Ave. Dept. 301, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0200
Phone: 701.328.2372 Fax: 701.328.4727 E-mail: health@nd.gov

Visit the health department home page at www.ndhealth.gov.